



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

April 26, 2019

Mr. Trey Qualls
Assistant City Attorney
City of Fort Worth
200 Texas Street, 3rd Floor
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-6311

OR2019-11161

Dear Mr. Qualls:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 762023 (Reference No. W081217).

The Fort Worth Police Department (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified motor vehicle accident. You state the department has released some of the requested information. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses information made confidential by other statutes. We note the submitted information consists of recordings from police officers' body worn cameras. Body worn cameras are subject to chapter 1701 of the Occupations Code. Section 1701.661(a) of the Occupations Code provides:

(a) A member of the public is required to provide the following information when submitting a written request to a law enforcement agency for information recorded by a body worn camera:

- (1) the date and approximate time of the recording;
- (2) the specific location where the recording occurred; and
- (3) the name of one or more persons known to be a subject of the recording.

Occ. Code § 1701.661(a). We note the requestor provided the information required by section 1701.661(a) of the Occupations Code for release of the body worn camera recordings at issue. We understand the submitted recordings were required to be made by law or the policies of the department and the recording relates to a law enforcement purpose. *See id.* § 1701.661(h). We also understand the recordings at issue were or could be used as evidence in a criminal prosecution. *See id.* § 1701.661(d). Additionally, we have no indication the recordings document an incident that involves the use of deadly force by an officer or relates to an administrative or criminal investigation of an officer. *See id.* § 1701.660(a). We note, however, section 1701.661(f) provides, in relevant part:

A law enforcement agency may not release any portion . . . of a recording involving the investigation of conduct that constitutes a misdemeanor punishable by fine only and does not result in arrest, without written authorization from the person who is the subject of that portion of the recording or, if the person is deceased, from the person's authorized representative.

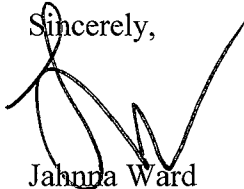
Id. § 1701.661(f). You state the submitted information consists of body worn camera recordings involving the investigation of conduct that constitutes a misdemeanor punishable by fine only and which did not result in an arrest. You state you do not have permission for release from all of the subjects in the recordings at issue. *See id.* Accordingly, we find the department must withhold the submitted body worn camera recordings under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 1701.661(f) of the Occupations Code.

Finally, you ask this office to issue a previous determination permitting the department to withhold certain information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 1701.661(f) of the Occupations Code without the necessity of requesting a decision under section 552.301 of the Government Code. *See Gov't Code* § 552.301(a) (allowing a governmental body to withhold information subject to previous determination); Open Records Decision No. 673 (2001) (listing elements of second type of previous determination under section 552.301(a) of the Government Code). We decline to issue such a previous determination at this time. Accordingly, this letter ruling is limited to the

particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Jahna Ward
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JW/gw

Ref: ID# 762023

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)